

OIA-72/79
5 September 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, National Foreign Assessment Center

SUBJECT : Project [] Memorandum

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1. I have read [] memorandum on Project [] my reaction is a mixture of anger and frustration. He has essentially ignored the sizable stake of the Office of Imagery Analysis by treating the issue solely as an OGCR-OER power struggle. He seems to look upon the OIA and NPIC imagery analysts as the hired help, and OIA's views as parochial and trivial. I do not consider our views in this matter to be either parochial or trivial. For us, the gut issue is not in itself whether or not a couple of OIA analysts continue to work in OGCR for another year or so, but rather how you, as Director of NFAC, can best utilize the analytical asset the [] people in OIA comprise. In my view the proper resolution of this matter is central to the effective operation of this Office and has important resource management implications for NFAC as a whole.

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2. The failure to treat the imagery analysis equities in the paper is a fundamental flaw, but not the only one. In my view there are also some serious logical and factual errors in it as it stands. I have summarized three of the most important below and I have a longer list available if you are interested in details.

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a. [] argues that the only way [] can operate is via the team approach and that all members of the team must reside together in OGCR. What he is in effect saying is that any interdisciplinary research requires the people involved being physically located together. This simply is not true. There are numerous examples--I provided John Hicks with a few earlier--where imagery has been a key information source to a large, multifaceted research effort, and where the analysis was performed in OIA or NPIC away from the other analysts. Clearly, experience shows that the key to the success of any multidisciplinary research effort is for the project to have the full management support of all offices involved, to make sure that high quality people are assigned to the project, and to ensure that all parties fully understand the purpose, scope and timing of the effort, and the particular role each organization is to play. Co-location may be a nice plus, but it certainly isn't either a sufficient or a necessary condition for success, as [] and the OGCR people seem to think.

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STAT b. I do not at all agree with the contention in the [redacted] memorandum that [redacted] is still in an R&D phase, and will continue as such for perhaps 2-3 more years. In January 1977 we were told that the period of time required to test the feasibility of the effort--the R&D phase--was 90 days. The R&D phase has since been extended several times to the point where more than 2 1/2 years have passed. The projection now is that [redacted] could continue in an R&D phase for another 2-3 years. It seems to me that the R&D phase was the development and testing of the model, and that application of the model to other fields is an operational phase. Moreover, the proposed Field Assessment Plan attached to the [redacted] memorandum shows research efforts going beyond the assessment

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STAT [redacted] feasibility study. Based on the history of [redacted] to date and the proposed plan for the future, I see the project having an "R&D phase" that will continue indefinitely--going well beyond the original charter of designing and testing an [redacted]

STAT c. I do not at all understand [redacted] logic for concluding that the management of [redacted] remaining efforts should be assigned to OGCR. He convincingly argues that: 1) OER is the lead office with the comparative advantage on energy analysis matters; and 2) there would be no team without the imagery analysts. Under these circumstances, assigning the management of the project to OGCR for a limited period of time makes no sense at all. It would merely institutionalize the present unfortunate fragmentation of NFAC's energy analysis effort.

STAT As it now stands, the imagery analysts provide the key technical inputs to the model and have the primary interface

[redacted]
STAT analytical equipment such as light tables and mensuration gear. The contractors and part-time participants can travel to OIA as well as OGCR. In fact, I am completely confident that if the imagery analysts for Project [redacted] had resided in [redacted] from the start, the results of the project would not have been any different than they are today.

STAT 3. As I stated above, the gut issue from OIA's point of view is how NFAC can maximize the use of its imagery analysis assets. When I apply this general principle to the energy analysis problem, I am convinced that the imagery analysis support for [redacted] should be managed by OIA and be conducted in [redacted] It is critical

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to the overall quality of analysis on energy, to the most efficient use of a scarce and important resource, and to the careers of the analysts involved. At the present time, this Office is desperately trying to develop a cadre of imagery analysts conversant in all

STAT [redacted] We see this as being necessary to support the growing and important demands on NFAC for intelligence related to energy. To continue to have our scarce resources split into two groups--physically separated from each other and analyzing distinct but related aspects of energy problems--runs counter to everything we are trying to achieve. High quality imagery analysis is essential to the success of [redacted] It is just as essential to many other aspects of NFAC energy analysis. STAT

4. There is still a tendency on the part of some to look upon the imagery analysts as a somewhat different kind of beast in the world of NFAC. His skills are viewed as completely fungible. It is believed that he can be moved from place to place to perform different substantive tasks in support of larger analytical efforts without any loss in quality. Sure, imagery analysts are flexible like other analysts in NFAC but that is the point, they are analysts in exactly the same sense as anyone else is in NFAC. The OIA analyst just happens to rely on imagery as his basic--but not only--source of information. He is not much different from the OWI analyst who basically relies on telemetry information or the OPA analyst who largely relies on human sources. The imagery analyst--like any other analyst--can best perform by working in his parent organization where he has his tools and information sources readily available, and where he can share his knowledge and test his judgments with his fellow analysts.

5. In summary, I think that lack of adequate treatment of the imagery analysis equities seriously detracts from [redacted] study. However, based on what it does contain and what I know about the subject I believe that Project [redacted] should be turned over to OER to become an operational part of the Petroleum Supply Analysis Center (PSAC). It probably would also be advisable to assign [redacted] to PSAC to retain the utility of his special knowledge of the model. (If my memory is correct, these two moves were being recommended by Jim Lynch not too many months ago.) STAT
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Noel E. Firth
Director
Imagery Analysis

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Chris Copy
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Bruce
John

Hap Hazzard and I have discussed the imagery analysis support to [] several times. We would both appreciate the opportunity to present our views orally to you before you make a final decision if you have time.



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(DATE)

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